



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*  
*100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900*  
*Boston, MA 02114-2119*

Mitt Romney  
GOVERNOR

Kerry Healey  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Stephen R. Pritchard  
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000  
Fax: (617) 626-1181  
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 15, 2005

**CONTACTS:** Joe Ferson, EOE  
(617) 626-1119  
Joe O'Keefe, EOE  
(617) 626-1026

**EOEA AWARDS \$24,343 TO ASSIST LOCAL STEWARDSHIP OF COASTAL AREAS  
OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**

Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) today announced four separate grants targeted to assist local groups in protecting the Commonwealth's coastal areas, specifically Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

Protecting ACECs, which are state-designated special resource areas identified and nominated at the community level, involves a proactive approach between local, regional, and state officials and agencies, citizens, and nonprofit groups. Today's Stewardship Grants from EOE help the local groups conduct additional resource management, research and planning for ACECs.

"Massachusetts is fortunate to have concerned groups of citizens whose vigilance and commitment to protecting our coastal resources is deserving of the support these grants can offer," Pritchard said.

Coastal Zone Management (CZM), an EOE agency, is distributing the grants. CZM also provides technical assistance to ACEC communities in cooperation with another EOE agency, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), which administers the ACEC Program on behalf of the Secretary, as well as overseeing state forests and parklands.

DCR Commissioner Stephen R. Burren credited this grant program for raising the visibility and educating the public about ACECs. "CZM's grant program for Coastal ACECs directly helps us achieve the resource management goals we have for these critical areas. DCR and CZM have a long history of working cooperatively in the coastal zone. Quite simply, these grants increase the awareness and capacity of our local and regional partners whose involvement is essential to our continued success."

(more)

This year's **ACEC Stewardship Grant** recipients are:

- Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) (for the Parker River/Essex Bay ACEC): \$3,492 for Open Space Residential Design, an ACEC Community Choice. Through targeted outreach to municipal officials and the general public, MAS is assisting the Essex Planning Board to present concepts and a model bylaw of Open Space Residential Design (OSRD) for consideration at fall Town Meeting. Funding is also supporting development of recommendations for future smart growth techniques. So far, OSRD has been adopted by four other communities in the Parker River/Essex Bay ACEC. This project overlaps with recent EOEA initiatives on Smart Growth and Low Impact Development.
- Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) (Cape Cod ACECs): \$5,000 for Volunteer Monitoring of Salt Marshes on Cape Cod. APCC is monitoring salt marshes prioritized for tidal restoration in or adjacent to two ACECs on Cape Cod (Sandy Neck/Barnstable Harbor ACEC). This project provides
  - ✓ a creative approach to increase awareness and stewardship of salt marshes through direct study of their ecology;
  - ✓ restoration monitoring at designated priority salt marsh restoration sites;
  - ✓ data to state partners for use in identifying and prioritizing future restoration efforts; and
  - ✓ evaluation for the success of restoration projects.
- Eight Towns and the Bay/Merrimack Valley Planning Council (Parker River/Essex Bay ACEC): \$8,351 for the evaluation of invasive species in the northern end of the Parker River/Essex Bay ACEC. The MassBays local governance committee of Eight Towns and the Bay is collecting data to provide initial documentation of emergent and established invasive *Phragmites* plant stands in the Newbury portion of the Parker River/Essex Bay ACEC. This data will be used in outreach and seeking support and funding from marsh stakeholders to establish a monitoring and remediation plan to restore saltmarsh. This work is supported by a recommendation from a recent report by the Tufts University Urban Environmental Planning Department to establish a *Phragmites* evaluation and monitoring program in ACEC communities.
- Saugus River Watershed Council (SRWC) (Rumney Marshes ACEC): 7,500 for Rumney Marshes ACEC Site Improvement Plan for Eastern Ave., Saugus. The SRWC is working in partnership with DCR to develop a site improvement plan for the DCR conservation land located along Eastern Ave. in Saugus. The plan will outline steps for transforming this site from a hot spot for illegal dumping in Rumney Marshes ACEC into a gateway for public access by:
  - ✓ implementing community cleanups to remove significant debris;
  - ✓ conducting public outreach and community meetings for site planning;
  - ✓ developing a site improvement plan (including public access improvements, barriers to illegal dumping, and stormwater management controls); and,
  - ✓ developing permit applications for the plan's completion.

Since its inception in 2002, the Coastal ACEC Stewardship Grant Program has awarded \$85,000 to dedicated communities and organizations within ACECs along Massachusetts' coastline.

###